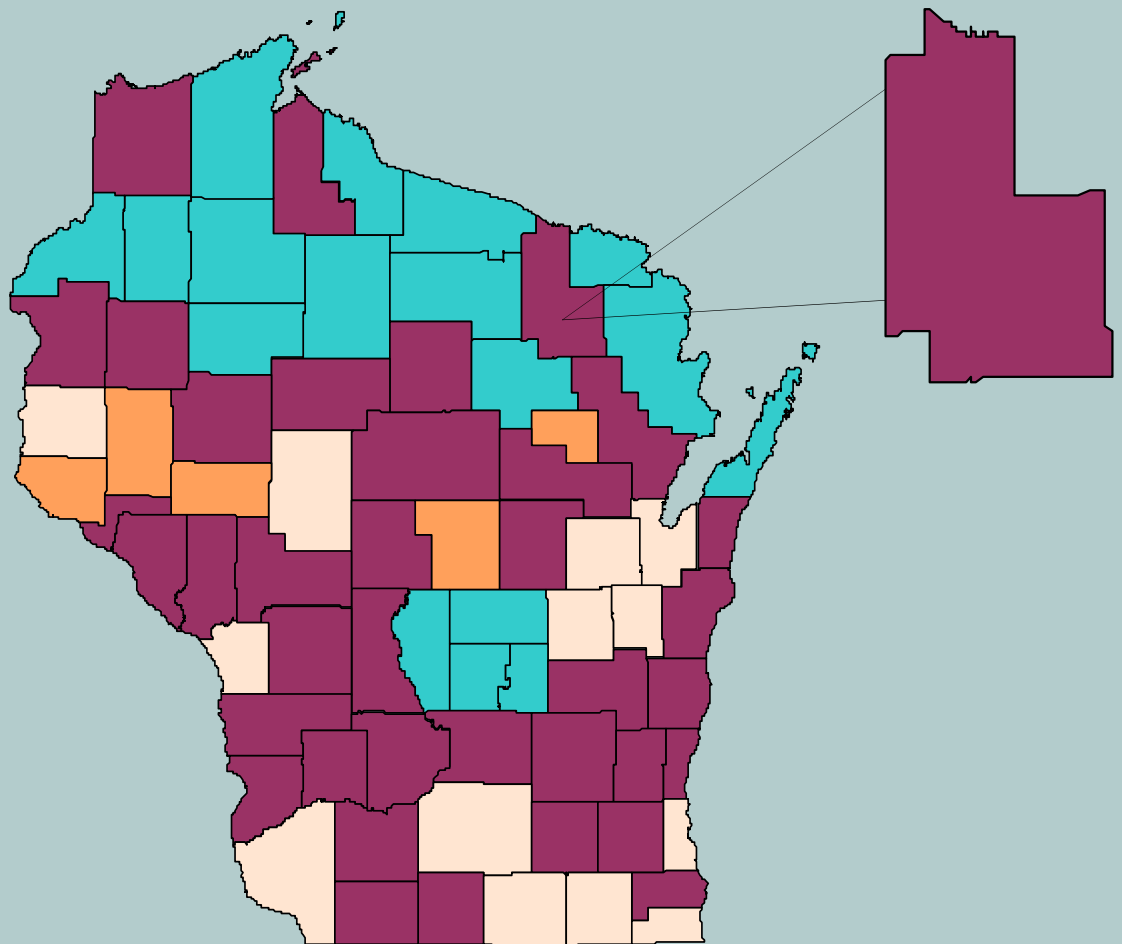
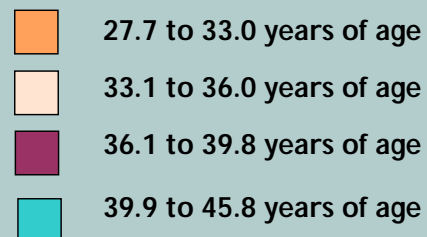


Forest County Workforce Profile

Median Age by County, 2000



Your complete
guide to the
state of the
labor force of
today and a
glimpse into
the economy of
tomorrow.





County Population

Forest County's rate of population growth from 1990 to 2000 was 14 percent, which was faster rate than both the state as a whole and the nation as well. However, Forest County is one of the lowest populated counties in Wisconsin, so any additional population into the county would have a more profound effect on statistical measures, than it would on a more populated locus. This 14 percent increase is a result of 1,248 more residents over this ten year span, 90 percent of which moved into the county rather than being born in the county.

Fifteen people were added to the population total of the county from 2000 to 2001. Compared to some other areas this lower number is somewhat typical of the more sparsely populated counties of the northern part of the state, where population increase is usually due more to in-migration rather than natural increase. Similarly, the towns of the county show little increase in the period mentioned, and some of the smaller areas have actually lost people. Considering normal social conditions it is somewhat unusual for any area to have such slow population growth. A more common increase is to be seen on the state and national levels, at around 6-8 percent or so, depending on the area of the country.

Forest County is currently on a pace to grow about five percent from 2000-2010. This is considerably slower than the last decennial performance, but is in line with the projected state rate of growth of about six percent.

How to account for this stagnation? There are several possibilities. Low birthrate is probably not the most important factor. A more likely explanation is that while natural increase is normal, there may be a loss of population due to younger people leaving the area. This is undoubtedly for either work or school. When this is combined with natural mortality, the result may be either demographic stagnation or even decline. It is difficult to say if this trend will continue or not, or if it will increase in the future, or what effect it will have on worker availability in this area. If the population stagnation is due to "youth flight", however, rather than other factors, it is likely that the effect on worker availability will mean the loss of younger entrants into the labor force in an area where a labor shortage is already in place. This shortage is not as acute in Forest County as in other counties, however.

Total Population

	2000 Census	January 1, 2001 Estimate	Percent change
United States	281,421,906	283,474,000	0.7%
Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,400,449	0.7%
Forest County	10,024	10,039	0.1%

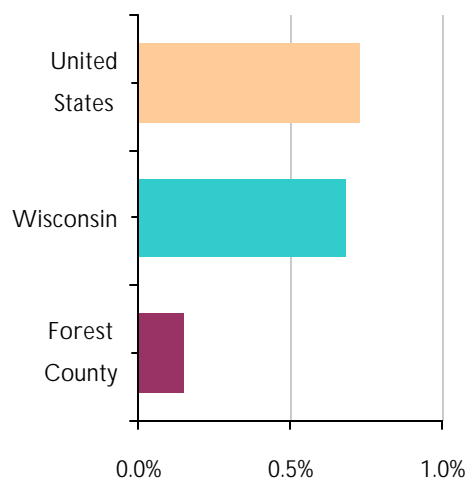
Ten Largest Municipalities

Crandon, City	1,961	1,945	-0.8%
Laona, Town	1,367	1,376	0.7%
Wabeno, Town	1,264	1,268	0.3%
Nashville, Town	1,157	1,161	0.3%
Lincoln, Town	1,005	1,010	0.5%
Crandon, Town	614	618	0.7%
Argonne, Town	532	533	0.2%
Armstrong Creek, Town	463	468	1.1%
Hiles, Town	404	409	1.2%
Freedom, Town	376	381	1.3%

* Forest portion only

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Demographic Services, 2002

Population Growth 2000-2001



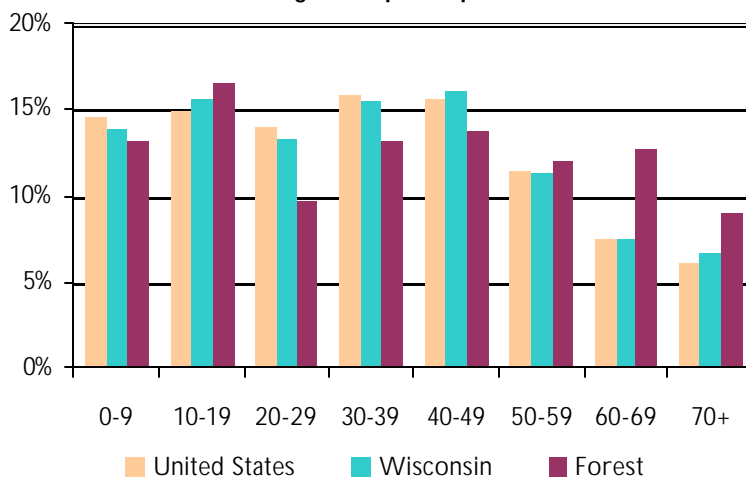


State of Wisconsin - Forest County

The labor force is composed of two main elements—people who are working (either full time or part time) and people who are not working but looking for work. These may be first time entrants, workers released from their last job and seeking another, or those reentering the workforce after a period of time. Typical of the latter category are retired workers returning to work and female workers going back to work after a number of years, just to name two.

A brief look at the different age groups in Forest County shows some differences from the state and national averages. At the latter end of the scale, for instance, in the range of ages 50-70+, the proportion of these people is greater than Wisconsin or the country, with a spike of those people in the 60-69 category. Considering the ages between 20-49, or what one might call the prime working years, the Forest County totals are somewhat proportionately lower than both the state and nation. This aging of the county population is probably a trend that will not be changing in the near future.

2000 Age Group Comparison

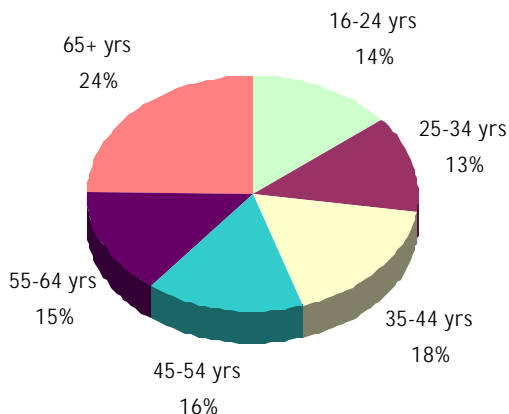


Source: US Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

Median age	33.3 yrs.	36.0 yrs	39.9 yrs.
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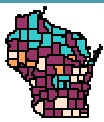
County Civilian Labor Force

Forest County Labor Force Age Groups



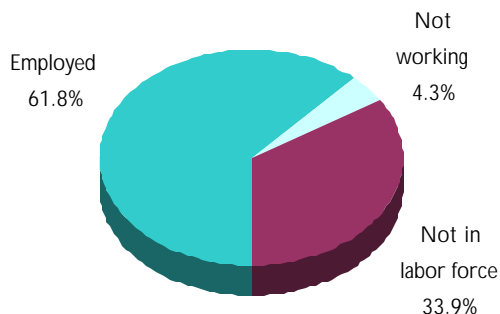
Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

Those over 55 in the Forest County labor force are about 40 percent of the total labor force. This is somewhat higher than most other areas of the state. The other age cohorts (ages 16 through 54) take up the rest. The thing to remember about the oldest group is that, although there is no upper limit to the labor force, in reality it is questionable if many members of the 65+ element are looking for work, or interested in working at all. Although in recent years, older workers have been returning to the labor force in increasing numbers, the exact number is hard to place and reliable statistics for the more rural areas do not exist.



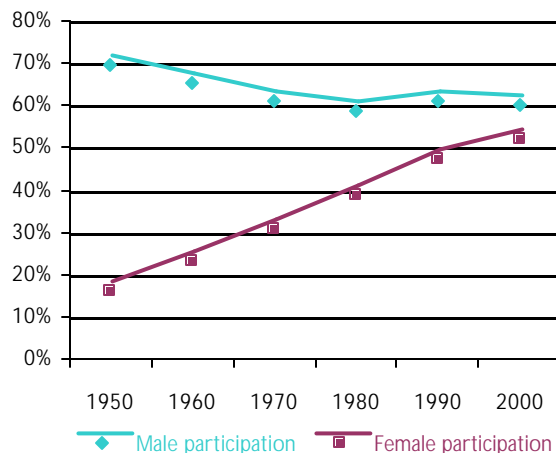
State of Wisconsin - Forest County

2001 Labor Force Participation



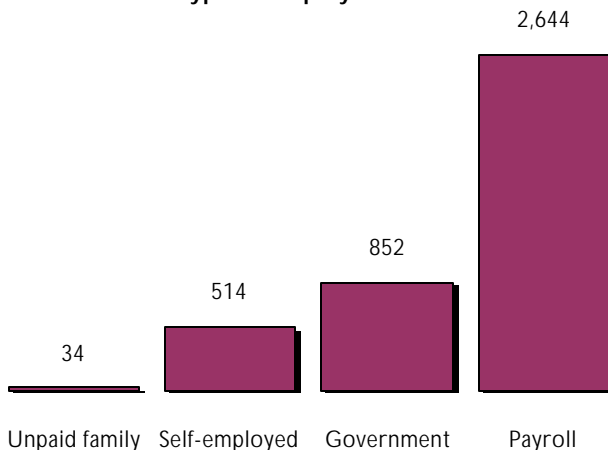
Source: Estimated from WI Dept. of Administration population estimates, Jan. 2001, US Census Bureau, and WI Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

Labor Force Participation of Male and Female Residents



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

Type of Employment

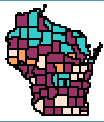


Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

Over 60 percent of the population of Forest County are working, and the percentage not working is under 5 percent. Historically, the percentage not working is small for this county, which in years past may have had nearly 10 percent of the population unemployed. Between 1996 and 2001, the labor force in Forest County increased by just a little under 300 people. Certainly, this is not large by some county standards, but is fairly healthy enough growth for a northern, rural Wisconsin county.

The term used to describe the relationship between the labor force and population is the labor force participation rate. A somewhat higher number of people in the population of Forest County seem to be out of the labor force, but not an unusually high number. This may be due to a somewhat higher number of retired people in this county and other northern counties in recent years. Almost 61 percent of Forest County's labor force age population are working (unchanged from two years ago) with just under 4.5 percent of that labor force unemployed. This percentage changes with the seasons, of course. One thing to remember is that this rate of unemployment is, historically, very low for Forest County or any of the northern counties of the Wisconsin River Valley District.

An interesting phenomenon occurring in Forest County and elsewhere, as well, is the growing number of women participating the labor force. This movement, which began in earnest during WW II, has been increasing strongly since the early 1950's as more women of all ages entered the workplace for both part-and full-time work. Male rates of participation stood at about 70 percent in the post-war years and have declined to about 60 percent in the recent past. This level of decline is fairly uncommon in other Wisconsin Counties, where the rate is more steady through the years, and the line on the chart more flat. The increase in female participation rates is fairly easy to explain in strictly economic terms, but why male participation decline is occurring is less easy. Part of this may be demographics, part a function of the aging of the population as the baby boomers reach retirement age in recent and the upcoming years.

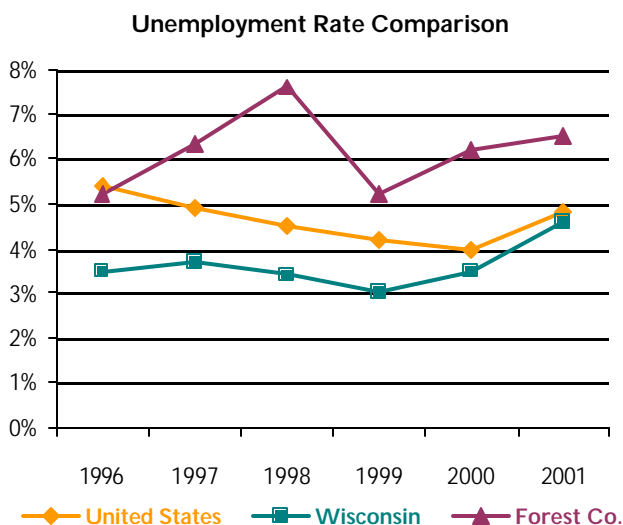


State of Wisconsin - Forest County

(Note - Although these 1990 Census Commuting numbers have not yet been updated by the 2000 Census, we do not anticipate any significant changes in the general pattern of movement.)

From a total labor force of nearly 5,000 in Forest County in 2001, many leave the county each day to work elsewhere. More of these commuting workers drive to Oneida county than to any other, and those entering Forest County from Oneida amount to less than half that number.

It is impossible to say what kinds of jobs these workers are commuting to, or what their professions are. They may be stable, permanent types of jobs, such as professional employment, or perhaps manufacturing jobs in a neighboring county. Or, they are the kinds of jobs that typically take a person some distance from his or her home, like seasonal construction work. However, construction employment has never registered more than 80 or 90 jobs total in Forest County in the last few years, so many Forest County construction workers may be leaving the area to find work.

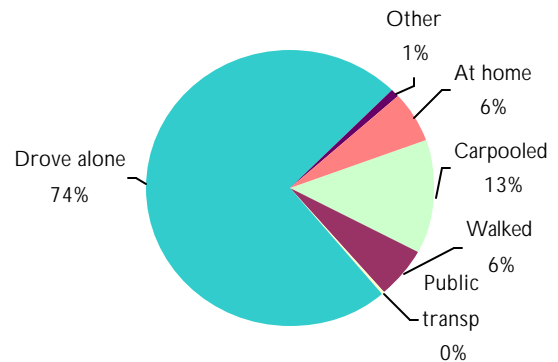


Forest County Civilian Labor Force Data

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Labor Force	4,700	4,600	4,600	4,400	4,600	4,900
Employed	4,400	4,300	4,300	4,200	4,300	4,600
Unemployed	240	290	350	230	280	320
Unemployment Rate	5.2%	6.3%	7.6%	5.2%	6.2%	6.5%

Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, revised March 2002

County Travel-to-Work Patterns



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, Census 2000

A look at the travel-to-work patterns of Forest County workers reveals some interesting things about Forest County workers and their driving habits. Not surprisingly, most people drive to work alone. This is the pattern in other places as well, (inside and outside of Wisconsin), even where carpooling is strongly encouraged. Just over 13 percent of work drivers carpool (how many in each car is not known), but this is a higher than average number for carpooling. The percentage of people taking public transportation stands at zero because there is no public transportation in Forest County.

Rates of unemployment in Forest County since 1996 have been consistently higher than either Wisconsin or the United States. The percentage of people in the labor force not working has not gone below five percent since 1996. It should be said that the average rate has been higher than this in Forest County in years past during times of economic downturn or recession. An unemployment rate of around 6.0 percent or so is not unusual for a northern Wisconsin county.



County Industry Employment

Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment

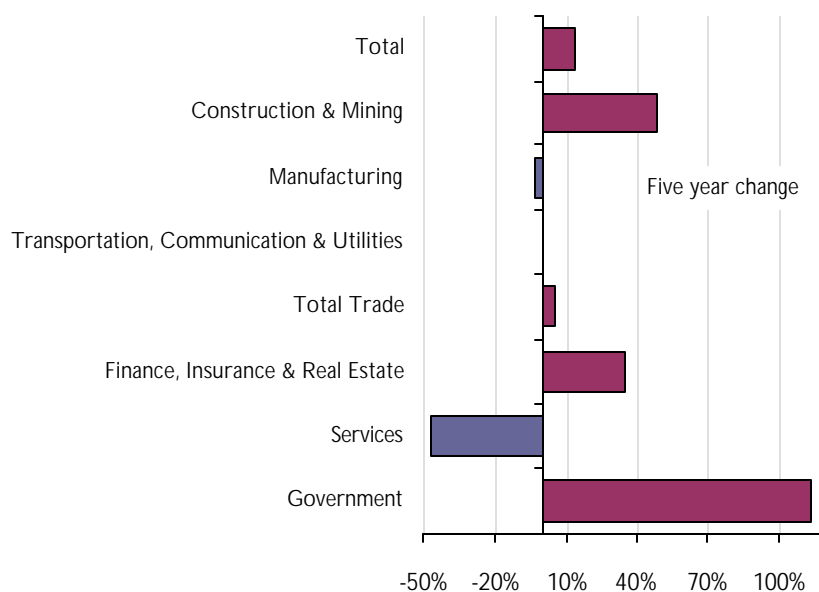
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Percent change	
							1 year	5 year
Total	3,041	3,041	3,041	3,108	3,228	3,452	6.9%	13.5%
Goods Producing	558	506	523	565	576	567	-1.5%	1.6%
Construction & Mining	57	68	69	71	79	85	7.5%	48.1%
Manufacturing	501	438	453	494	497	482	-2.9%	-3.7%
Durable	393	420	434	477	480	468	-2.5%	19.1%
Nondurable	108	17	19	16	17	15	-14.0%	-86.4%
Service Producing	2,483	2,536	2,518	2,543	2,652	2,885	8.8%	16.2%
Transportation, Communications & Utilities	242	236	220	217	221	241	9.4%	-0.3%
Total Trade	492	489	468	500	512	519	1.4%	5.5%
Wholesale	50	49	47	44	42	42	-0.5%	-14.9%
Retail	443	440	421	455	470	477	1.5%	7.8%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	72	83	91	92	94	98	3.7%	35.8%
Services & Misc.	969	978	759	507	473	515	9.0%	-46.8%
Total Government	707	750	980	1,228	1,352	1,511	11.8%	113.6%

Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, Nonfarm wage and salary estimates, revised March 2002

Nonfarm wage and salary employment measures the number of jobs within a county excluding military, and self-employed workers. This data measures the number of jobs within the county without consideration of where the job-holder lives. Thus, this information is often referred to as "place of work" data.

When one looks at the employment picture in Forest County by industry over the period 1996—2001, some employment levels increased. There was a significant decrease in job levels in the service sector, but this was due to the fact that gaming employment was moved into the government sector.. Construction employment increased by nearly 50 percent, but in terms of overall numbers, this is a rather small part of the total industrial picture of this county.

Employment Change by Industry Division: 1996 to 2001



The employment picture of Forest County bears watching in the years to come as present employment trends indicate possible problems in that labor market, most particularly rather small growth in trade employment. This is somewhat unusual in an area with an important tourist presence. Finance, insurance and real estate and construction have moved up at good pace, with the latter reflecting the building "boom" of recent years throughout the district. The jump in government employment is caused by the counting of gaming jobs in the government sector.

Source: WI DWD, Nonfarm wage and salary estimates, revised March 2002



State of Wisconsin - Forest County

Top 10 Employers

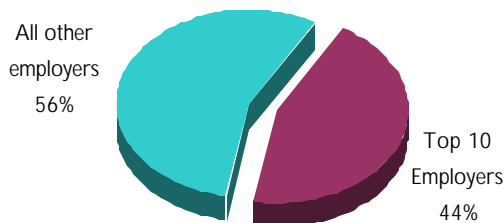
Company	Product or Service	Size
Forest County Potawatomi Community	Tribal Employment	250-499
Potawatomi Bingo/Northern Lights	Tribal Employment	100-249
School District of Crandon	Public Employment	100-249
County of Forest	County Government	100-249
Sokaoqon Gaming Enterprise Corp.	Resort & Entertainment	100-249
Nicolet Hardwoods Corp.	Wood Products Manufacturing	100-249
School District of Wabeno Area	Public Education	100-249
Bemis Manufacturing	Manufacturing	50-99
Novak Trucking Service	Trucking and Cartage	20-49
Laona State Bank	Banking & Finance	20-49

Top 10 Industry Groups

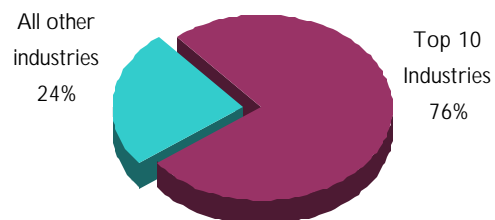
Industry Group	March 2001		Numeric change	
	Employers	Employees	1-year	5-year
Executive, Legislative, and General	18	635	414	414
Amusement & Recreation Services	6	376	*	*
Lumber and Wood Products	25	374	-7	-7
Educational Services	5	363	19	19
Health Services	9	241	0	0
Trucking and Warehousing	39	174	28	28
Eating and Drinking Places	20	169	15	15
Food Stores	4	125	-3	-3
Environmental Quality and Housing	*	*	*	*
Hotels and other Lodging Places	*	*	*	*

*data suppressed to maintain confidentiality

**Top 10 Employers' Share of
Nonfarm Employment**



**Top 10 Industry Group Share
of Nonfarm Employment**



Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, ES-202 file tape, December 2001

When one looks at the industrial landscape of Forest County, one of the most obvious features is the relatively small size of individual businesses. The larger employers in the county have between 100 and 300 employees, with only a couple showing between 50-99. The majority have less than 50 workers. This is what one would expect in a smaller labor market such as that of Forest County.

The larger private sector employers are a cross section of the industrial spectrum - manufacturing, service, trade, transportation. This variety is a healthy condition in any labor market. In Forest County, the top ten industries portion of the employment picture is about three-quarters of all employed, which is much larger share than would be found in a more populous county.



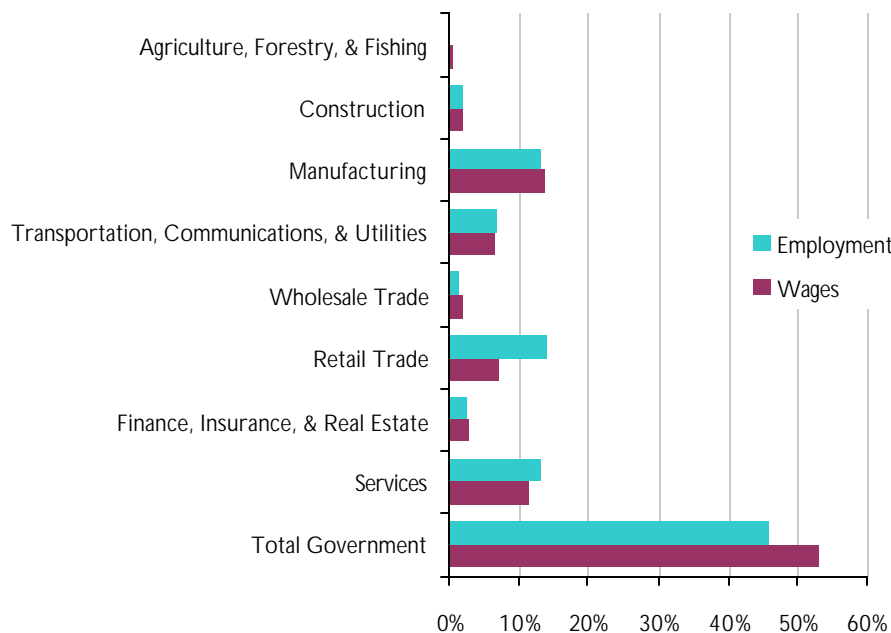
State of Wisconsin - Forest County

When looking at the table at the bottom of the page, one thing that stands out is the fourth column, indicating the *percent of the state average wage* paid in different industries in Forest County. The wage levels in Forest County are almost uniformly about 30-40 percent below those paid to workers across the state as a whole. In a smaller, northern rural county in Wisconsin, it would not be surprising that there are going to be some differences in pay, but the actual differences here may be among some of

the greatest in the state.

Manufacturing employment, traditionally in the higher levels of pay in any given labor market, has an average annual wage in Forest County well below that of the state average. Transportation and utilities, another high paying industry in most areas of the state, comes in at only about 55 percent of the state average. Occupational elements of this sector would be local hauling, pulp truck hauling, and others, which in this part of the state, often pay close to minimum wage or just above.

Employment & Wage Distribution by Industry Division



Construction employment, which is one of the highest paying among the blue collar occupations throughout the state, pays rather poorly in Forest County. Compensation for building workers is about 30 percent lower than that of the state average, which is up from just a few years ago. This somewhat lower wage may be due to the fact that construction outfits here are small operations, with 3-5 employees, and seldom pay near union scale wages.

Annual Average Wage By Industry Division

	Forest Co. Annual Average Wage	Wisconsin Annual Average Wage	Percent of State Average	1-year percent change	5-year percent change
All Industries*	\$ 20,749	\$ 30,922	67.1%	2.0%	21.3%
Agriculture, Forestry, & Fishing	\$ 34,678	\$ 22,565	153.7%	-47.1%	450.4%
Construction	\$ 20,600	\$ 39,011	52.8%	0.2%	37.5%
Manufacturing	\$ 21,476	\$ 39,739	54.0%	0.4%	23.5%
Transportation, Communications, & Utilities	\$ 20,546	\$ 36,639	56.1%	-3.9%	8.6%
Wholesale Trade	\$ 30,380	\$ 40,521	75.0%	1.7%	-3.8%
Retail Trade	\$ 10,443	\$ 14,596	71.5%	4.2%	9.6%
Finance, Insurance, & Real estate	\$ 22,431	\$ 40,933	54.8%	5.1%	18.2%
Services	\$ 18,061	\$ 28,775	62.8%	-11.5%	14.4%
Total Government	\$ 24,035	\$ 33,785	71.1%	-2.4%	16.0%

* Mining excluded from table since wages were suppressed to maintain confidentiality in every county

Source: WI DWD, *Employment, Wages, and Taxes Due covered by Wisconsin's U.C. Law, 2002*



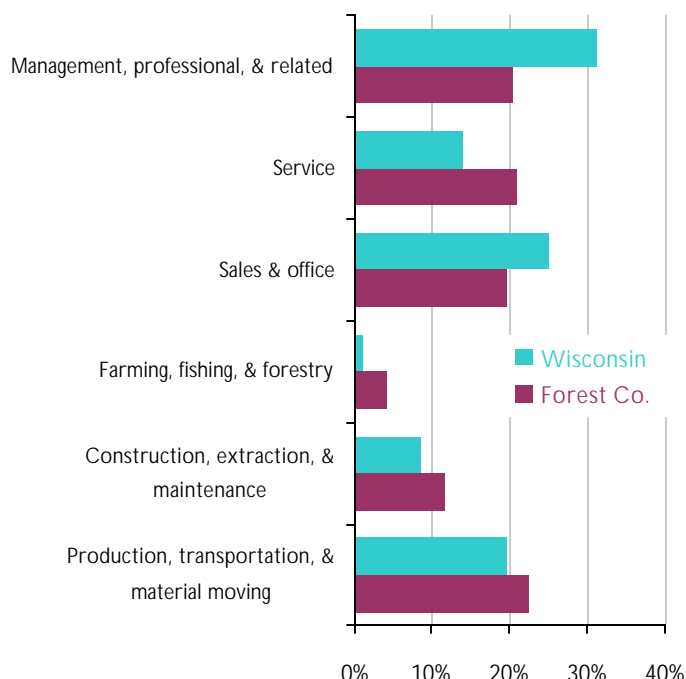
Occupation and Education Characteristics of County Population

It should not be surprising that the occupational profile of Forest County is going to be different than that of the state, or most other counties, for that matter. Taking a close look at the occupational makeup of any area—county, city, state—especially when making comparisons with other areas can tell us a few things about what the working people there are busy with, which industries are prominent in the area, and by extension, what the needs of the businesses involved are going to be as far as worker skills are concerned. What this often means, amongst other things, is levels of educational attainment of individual workers or groups of workers in that area, and most importantly, are they available.

In a general sense, it may be hard to tell which comes first, the need for certain skills in any given labor market, or the aspirations and career plans of individuals. That would depend on the point of view one takes. But ultimately, people go where the jobs are, which may help to explain the speculated “brain drain” phenomenon in Wisconsin. When one looks at Forest County and compares educational attainment with employment by occupation, what links exist (if any) between them?

Not surprisingly, the majority of people have a high school diploma, with just over 20 percent not hav-

Employment by Occupation Group: 2000

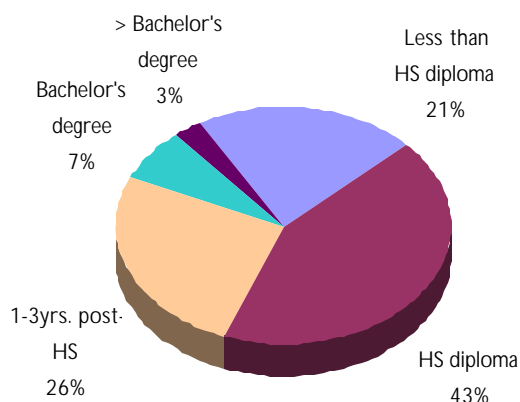


US Department of Commerce, Census 2000

ing graduated. Beyond high school, another quarter have taken further study, the majority of these probably in areas of vocational preparation. College graduates compose about 10 percent of the population aged 25 and older

Professional level occupations in Forest County are better than 10 percent lower than the state average, whereas jobs in the service sector are somewhat above the average (as mentioned elsewhere, employment in gaming was moved from service to government, or this percentage would be even higher). This may roughly accord with the educational profile of the county, with its somewhat smaller number of highly educated workers compared to the 64 percent or so of high school grads and below. Presumably, these people would be participating largely in the blue collar sector of the work force.

Education Attainment in 2000



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*



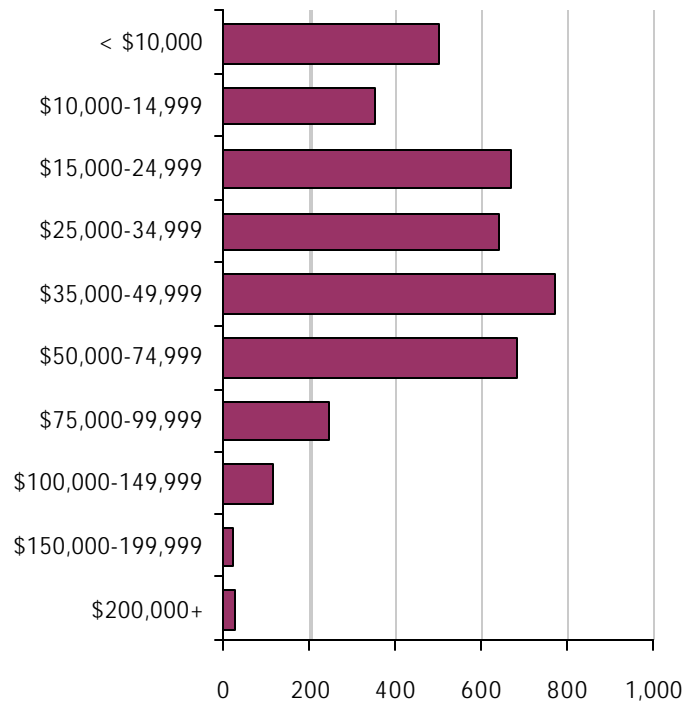
County Income Information

Per capita income is total income divided by the total number of residents. Income includes wages earned, dividends from investments, and transfer payments from the government. Forest County's per capita income ranked one of the last of Wisconsin's 72 counties during 2000.

Per capita income can be influenced by the number of wage earners, average family size, and is just as much a product of population dynamics as the dollars themselves. Per capita income can influence the type of services and housing available within a county. Over the past six years, Forest County per capita income has increased by about \$4,000, or about 20 percent over the period. This is not an inconsiderable increase for a rural northern county, but still well behind the state level, for example.

Wages paid for work within a county can impact the type of goods and services, which may be purchased. Examining wage structures can be an important part of the hiring process for both job seekers and employers. Forest County net earnings from jobs do not compare well to the state and to the nation. Transfer payment in this respect probably come in the form of social security disbursements. One of the key advantages of this income measure is that it shows that income comes from a variety of sources besides job wages,

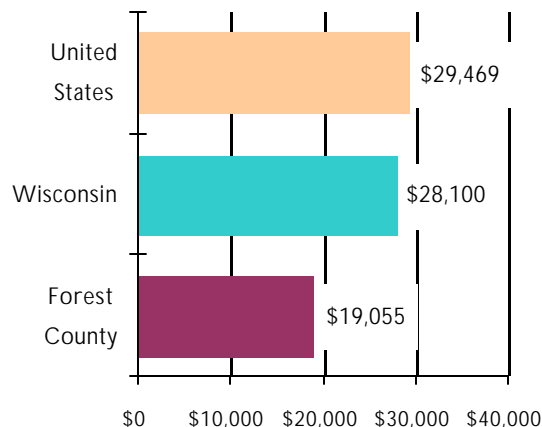
Households by Income Range
Median household income in Forest Co. \$32,023



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

or retirement benefits. Dividends, interest and rental income also make up a good share of Adams County income.

Per Capita Personal Income 2000



Source: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

Components of Total Personal Income: 2000

